

Mr. COATS. Will the Senator yield for a unanimous consent request?
Ms. HEITKAMP. Sure.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COATS. I thank the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

AMENDMENT NO. 1986

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I am very excited about the Kirk-Heitkamp amendment getting an overwhelming show of support. The reality is that if we do not vote on the Kirk-Heitkamp bill itself and pass it out of this Chamber, at the end of this month, the charter for the Ex-Im Bank will expire.

This vote has nothing to do with the charter for the Ex-Im Bank. It does nothing to prevent the charter for the Ex-Im Bank from expiring. This is at a time when China and India are pumping billions of dollars into their export credit agency. This is at a time when we have \$15 billion worth of credit waiting to move through the Ex-Im Bank so we create jobs here in our country—jobs for American workers—and we are stalling the Bank.

When we had this discussion during the TPA debate, we wanted to have a vote that would guarantee we would have an opportunity to prevent the charter for the Ex-Im Bank from expiring. That is not this vote today.

I am extraordinarily gratified by the show of support because what it really does tell us is if we bring up an Ex-Im Bank bill on its own—an extension bill on its own—we will be able to prevent something from happening that could have catastrophic economic results in this country. So I urge this body to find a path forward to prevent the Ex-Im Bank charter from expiring, to have a path forward to honor our commitments that were made during an earlier vote so we can have a vote and actually move this bill forward and not simply have a vote to show support but actually pass a bill.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, will the Senator from North Dakota yield for a question?

Ms. HEITKAMP. Yes.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Senator for her comments and I ask her this question: So that we understand the procedure that just took place, there was an amendment offered that would have extended the Ex-Im Bank and then a motion to table it, and I believe 60 Members or more voted against the motion to table, which shows a positive sentiment about extending the Ex-Im Bank charter. After that vote, the sponsors of the amendment withdrew the amendment from this bill.

So at this moment in time, I wish to ask the Senator, for absolute clarity: We have nothing before us that would extend the Ex-Im Bank either in this bill or in any other manner before the end of June when it expires; is that correct?

Ms. HEITKAMP. That is absolutely correct.

Mr. DURBIN. And that creates a disadvantage for businesses in Illinois, and I am sure in North Dakota, in terms of exports and jobs, and unless we do take this seriously and quickly, they will be jeopardized.

Ms. HEITKAMP. I think the other thing it does also is it is a signal to all of those companies we are competing with, whether it is China or India, that we are out of the business, and that opens a wide path for them to be in the business of exports. So this takes us out of the business of financing exports, which is going to have and will have catastrophic results. We don't have a path forward, and the charter of the Bank expires at the end of this month. Without a path forward, we are opening an opportunity for our competitors to take those exports and to take away our opportunity to have those jobs.

So I am very gratified by the result of this vote because I think it signals support for Ex-Im Bank. When we get this kind of support from the U.S. Senate—almost veto-proof support—maybe we ought to move the bill. People will say there isn't an opportunity to do that; there is no path forward. Let me tell my colleagues that there is no one in the country who believes that is true. If there is a will, there is a way.

We have to have a vote on the Export-Import Bank by the end of the month and get it over to the House so the House can support it and move this forward or we will be playing chicken with the exports of the United States of America.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Will the Senator yield for another question?

Ms. HEITKAMP. Yes.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Senator AYOTTE, in offering this amendment, talked about a forum in New Hampshire at General Electric where a number of small businesses participated. Senator CANTWELL and I were at that forum. We heard testimony from an employee of a company called Goss International, which makes large printing presses and competes mostly with Germany but with countries around the world. One of the issues she spoke about is that they have \$10 million in deals that are sitting on the table at Ex-Im that they need to have approved before the end of June when the authorization expires. If those don't get approved, they are not going to be able to create 45 new jobs they are talking about being able to create as part of that deal.

So if the authorization for Ex-Im expires, not only is Goss going to have trouble with those jobs, but companies across this country are going to lose jobs that would be created if those fi-

nancing deals could go through; isn't that the case?

Ms. HEITKAMP. In fact, the case is nearly \$16 billion worth of American business and American exports that create American jobs will languish in the pipeline at the Ex-Im Bank because we foolishly let a charter expire at a time when we are in competition for exports, a competition for commerce throughout the world.

When we debated trade promotion—and a lot of us took some tough votes on TPA—we were promised a vote that would be mutually agreed upon here so we could advance the Ex-Im Bank by the end of June. We haven't gotten that vote because today all we did was show—I think rightfully so—that we have tremendous support in this body for the Ex-Im Bank and we shouldn't be held hostage to the narrow ideology of a few.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Ms. HEITKAMP. Yes.

Ms. CANTWELL. The Senator from North Dakota has obviously been working so hard on this in the Banking Committee, and she understands, I believe, that when the Bank expires on June 30, there is about \$12 billion of approved deals that are in the process, and they will not be approved while the Bank is not operating; is that correct?

Ms. HEITKAMP. That is correct. The last number I was given, I say to my friend, the Senator from Washington, was almost \$5.5 billion.

Ms. CANTWELL. So today's vote is a symbolic vote but does nothing to help us resolve the issue for getting this approved before June 30.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Unfortunately, too often we have symbolic votes that don't have real consequences in the real world. Our wonderful businesses that are outcompeting and outmanufacturing and outdeveloping and outresearching the rest of the world are now with their hands tied behind their backs and losing credits as we stand.

Ms. CANTWELL. Are there a lot of small businesses in South Dakota that are a part of this export economy?

I say that because I think a lot of people get the impression that this is about big manufacturers. I have always said those guys will take care of themselves; they have lots of people here to take care of them. But the small people who will actually lose business on June 30 don't have people here and that is why we are fighting so hard to get a vote before June 30 that actually will go over to the House on a vehicle.

Ms. HEITKAMP. We have companies in Wahpeton, ND, where bankruptcy has been prevented because they have been able to find their way to the Ex-Im Bank and actually find their way to a credit relationship with their importers.

We have a company in West Fargo that builds portable wheelchair ramps and they have saturated the market here and they are marketing these all